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VACATION DAYS

NINA BELL



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VACATION DAYS

A SKETCH BOOK

BY

NINA BELL



BOSTON

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TO
THE FRIENDS OF MY YOUTH

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VACATION DAYS

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A SKETCH BOOK

THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING

YOU may look 'mid yon gay crowded throng
Where the jest and the laugh pass around,
Where cares are lost in the dance and the song,
But my thoughts are not there.

My pleasant task lies near, forgot.
What means this strange unrest?
What once delight, indifference now hath brought;
For my thoughts are not there.

Some talk of trouble, and its bitter toll.
'Tis true my share has not been light,
For oft hath sorrow laid her burning hand upon
my soul.
Yet my thoughts are not there.

Above yon far-off mountain line,
Where the tinted clouds are piled softest,
Where the warm spring breeze basks in the sun-
shine,
Find my thoughts, as I've found yours there.

A SCHOOLGIRL EXPERIENCE

SPRING has been known from time immemorial as the season of day-dreaming, and for a general listlessness which puts hard work out of the question. The Germans have a word, "Infaulenzia," a modified form of "influenza," to express the certain feeling of indolence characteristic of this season.

Especially at this spring season of the year do I find that all work is disagreeable, and particularly, the task of writing themes. Sometimes I find it is the easiest thing in the world to write a theme, and then again there seems nothing more difficult to do. The first feeling generally comes in winter, the latter in spring. Whether this is an experience common to all, I do not know; but I find, to my sorrow that it often holds true in my own case. It is said that no one has thoughts and feelings which have not, at some time, occurred to some one else, so I suppose there is some one who can understand this feeling. It is said, too, that the spring season of the year produces more poets and writers than any other season; but I find it often stops my pen.

To show you just how badly off I am when I try to write a theme in spring, I will tell you the general process I go through. First, I follow out the rule of exposition, and collect the materials which are to be used. I sit down, pen in hand, with a blank sheet of paper before me, and begin to think.

What shall I write about? What subject shall I choose? I look around the room for an inspiration, and my eye falls on a book labeled *Organic Chemistry*. This is unfortunate, for the mere mention of the word "chemistry" always puts me in an unpleasant humor. I have a reason for feeling so. With that book near me, it is certain that my sheet of paper will remain blank, so I decide to seek some other atmosphere. I should have known enough to do this before; for one can't write a spring theme indoors. I sit down on the porch steps and proceed to go about my task naturally, and to let Nature have control of my thoughts. I wait patiently for an inspiration, looking lazily at the hills and the blue sky in the distance.

If any one wants to know a stimulant for daydreaming, I can safely recommend this habit of looking away into the distance. At such a distance everything is unreal and fantastic, and you can look into depths you can never fathom, but always you find a thought to dream about. I learned all this long ago, and as daydreaming is not conducive to study, I resolutely bring my thoughts back to earth. So far Nature has given me no promptings.

How beautiful and fresh everything is at this time of the year! The whole earth is green, and cool, and the leaves are just putting forth their foliage to add to the color scheme. How refreshing their shade will be a little later in the season, and how delightful it will be when the brilliancy of the flowers contrast with the scene. This reminds me of my roses. I can see them from where I

am sitting. They are leafing out beautifully. I try to imagine what they will look like when they bloom. At my right is an American Beauty, which will blossom this year for the first time. At my left is a lovely white rose, and there are others which I cannot see from here. How exquisitely beautiful are these flowers! What flower can equal the rose in delicacy of color, or in fragrance. Ah! Nature has at last come to my aid. I will write about "Roses."

"Every one has his favorite flower, and mine is the rose. Other flowers may be more pretending, others may be more charming in their modesty, but for me, the rose is fairest of all." This is the way I begin. Then I stop. That beginning doesn't seem just right. It sounds too much like a spring poet describing his lady love. It won't do to get poetical, so I try to be more practical. This seems to work better, for in a few minutes I have another impression. This is the way my thoughts run this time: "Horticulture is not supposed to be a course for girls, but there are parts of it which I think would interest every girl." Now I am getting along famously. "The care of an orchard is not apt to appeal to a girl, but the culture of flowers is sure to have some attraction for her." Just here I am interrupted by the mailman. This means that it must be getting late. I look at the clock and find that it is almost noon. I must hurry up this theme, for I have several other hard lessons to get.

If it hadn't been for the mailman, I would probably have got along all right this time, but after

reading the letter he brought me, I have no sympathy for horticulture. Something seems to be the matter with me this morning. I don't seem to be in the mood for theme writing. I finally give up in despair, and go into the house with my thoughts on divinity fudge. Divinity fudge is pretty sure to sweeten my temper. I carefully measure out the ingredients and am about to put them on the stove, when I discover that the fire is out. However, no obstacle is too great in such an important project so the fire is soon rekindled. Then I return to the process of candy-making, when a sudden thought comes to my mind! Why not write a theme about writing a theme, and simply relate my morning experience? Facts, after all, are the only things to be depended upon. Before facts all things must give way, even divinity fudge. With a sigh for my disappointed hopes, and a regretful glance at the potential fudge, I resolutely turn my philosophical mind toward facts and write.

MILANGELINE

THIS is the village of Milan.
Row upon row of dwellings,
Rude, uncouth, and unpainted,
Lie scattered along the valley;
Lie on the banks of the Little Spokane,
Where it tumbles in foam o'er the mill-dam.
High above are the lofty mountains,
That shorten the morn and the eve,
Concealing the blush of the dawning,
And the dying glow of the West.
Stately, erect, and unmoved,
Stand the pines of the fast thinning forest.
Steadily turns the mill wheel as ever,
Curls from a few chimneys the smoke,
But the noisy rush of the torrent
Is subdued by the passing train.

NIGHTFALL

SUNSET and dying West.

From far the pall of leaden darkness drops its melancholy hue,

The understanding stars their weary task renew,
And comes mine own unrest.

Amid the glare of day,

Whose glamor stills the eating care of many an aching heart,

Or jostled in the rushing stream of human mart,
A restful calm holds sway.

If in the busy round

A vacant moment comes in life's absorbing grind,
When thoughts of self, unbidden guests, invade the mind,

Fancies such as now abound.

And now at last the night.

No longer may forgetfulness, sweet balm, be close enticed,

But flees as flees the blush on yonder mountain height.

Oh, hasten not thy flight.

Ah! patient stars aglow,

Whence comes the cloud without a wind, the grief without a cause?

On high thy ceaseless, heavenly messegray pause,
And shine on me below.

AN EVENING EXPERIENCE

JUST as the darkness of the night was following the dusk, one Halloween evening, I was walking home, feeling all the time some supernatural element in the air. Suddenly, without any warning, as I passed through a lonely street, I saw a figure clad in white creep through a gap in the hedge. The mysterious personage crouched among the shadows, listened a moment, then stood erect. It was then that I saw, though dimly, a large, round something carried carefully under his arm.

This strange procedure provoking my curiosity, I remained concealed on my own side of the street to await developments. My patience was rewarded, for in a few minutes I saw another similarly clad figure emerging from the darkness, and creeping stealthily along the hedge. He, too, had the same mysterious bundle in his arms which, in this case, was so large as almost to overbalance its small bearer. As I waited, wondering, another shadowy form appeared, then another, and another, until I counted a group of ten. One, the tallest, seemed to be the leader, and appeared to be giving directions to his fellow imps. Finally, at his signal, each follower produced his bundle, and when I looked again, ten lighted jack-o-lanterns were grinning at me through toothless mouths. Then, followed by his comrades, the ghost-like leader ran swiftly down the street, and vanished in the darkness, leaving me to wonder if I had been dreaming, or if these unearthly forms had emerged from the pages of some old fairy book.

COUNTRY LULLABY

TWILIGHT falls o'er the summer lea,
Sleep, baby, sleep.
The waves lap low on the deep blue sea,
Sleep, baby, sleep.
The breezes waft home the birds to the nest,
Softly the gay flowers sink to their rest;
Homeward the farmer turns his way,
Homeward turns at the end of day.
Sleep, my baby, sleep.

Heed not the voice of the lonely wind,
Sleep, baby, sleep.
Fear not the touch of the darkness so blind,
Sleep, baby, sleep.
Sleep, for the last ray dies in the west.
Rest, rest secure in thy feathery nest,
Angel wings hover and guard from above.
Peaceful and sweet may thy slumbers be.
Soft!—Thy father comes to thee.
Sleep, my baby, sleep.

NIGHTFALL IN THE MOUNTAINS

THE shadows deepen.
Hush! The night is on.
The distant tinkling chime of cowbells
As the scattered herd come wandering home,
Now grows faint and fainter, still,
Like the dying notes of a chord just struck.
Far up the glen one lone night bird
Startles the echoes with his dismal note,
Then silence stills him too.
Naught is heard but the solemn swell
Of the mighty forest's respiration.
Slowly the little campfire dies,
Hedged in closely by the shades of night,
Till the last flickering ember succumbs to sleep.
Enough! My musings likewise end.
I rise and join my sleeping mates.

SUNRISE AND SUNSET

A YOUNG man was about to leave his native town. Eager as he was to begin the work which was to claim his life, there was an underlying feeling of sadness at the thought of leaving home associations and friends, some of whom were very dear. It was partly due to this half-recognized feeling of homesickness, and partly to a notion that last things are sacred, that he had risen early this morning to take a last survey from the lookout hill.

The wind blew cold, and there was a suggestion of rain in the air, as the young man walked on briskly up the avenue of trees. As a drop of rain fell on his face he frowned up at the clouded sky in vexation that his last morning should be a gloomy one. It was very early, and a trace of darkness still remained. Everything around seemed to be asleep, and the rustling in the trees was very faint, now that the wind had died down. There was nothing to keep him company save his own thoughts, and these were not altogether cheerful. Heretofore the time had been too fully taken up to allow any dwelling upon uncertainties or possible failures; and any vague fear which may have presented itself was lost amid the congratulations of admiring classmates. Now, however, these considerations began to make him uncomfortable.

A sudden chirrup from a robin broke in upon this despondency, and looking up, the young man saw that the sky, before dark and forbidding, was be-

ginning to take on the color of the dawn. From cloud to cloud the delicate rose tints spread, and as the beauty grew the watcher's face lighted up involuntarily. He quickened his step and in another moment reached the top of the last hill, then started back at the sight before him. Just above the horizon's line was drawn a blazing stretch of fire, so sudden and brilliant in its beauty as to be startling. Far-away mountain-peaks stood out in sharp relief against this background, and the shadows on the nearest mountainside were still black. Gradually the radiance grew stronger and brighter, and the sun rose. The mountains were seen more clearly. The shadows changed to violet, and the eastern clouds were edged with gold. Turning, the man saw below him the town still asleep, and in shade. Then, all at once, the sun touched the highest hills around it, driving the shadows down into the valley, and last, the church towers were bathed for a moment in light. A moment thus, then all was again gray. The sun had passed behind the curtain of clouds, and was seen no more that day. The young man stood gazing a little longer, his shoulders unconsciously squared as he at length turned to give a parting glance toward the east. Then, with firm step, he descended into the valley, and if it was raining, he did not know it.

It was the day called homecoming day at the old academy, many years afterward. Most of the guests who had been wandering over the grounds during the day, gathered in reminiscent groups as evening drew near. Only a few remained upon the lookout

hill. One by one these withdrew, until at last only one old man was left. He sat on an old bench under the trees, leaning his hands upon his cane, silently watching the western sky, where the burning clouds were piled high. Curious inquirers were told he was an early graduate of the academy, but at mention of his name, no one showed signs of recognition. He had not gained fame. The man himself had the appearance of one who has achieved some measure of success; yet his face was deeply furrowed, and his shoulders were slightly stooped. The sun sank, and still he sat there musing. The red left the clouds and faded into gray. Twilight deepened into night, and the stars began to come out. Finally the old man rose, and as he stood for a moment in the night with uncovered head, one might have heard him sigh softly. Then he smiled. And he, too, turned to depart. What were his emotions? If you had asked him, he could hardly have told you.

INDIAN'S MEDITATION

FAR o'er his western trail blazes the sun in the burn-
ing sky,
Pants in his chase for Snoqualmie, the Moon—
Fruitless haste!
Now wearily, like an old man, sinks down the last
waste,
Hangs o'er the Land of the Setting Sun, o'er Allahi
Alki,
Land of the Bye and Bye.
Thither have gone all my fathers before me,
Fathers and young men, the happy, the lonely—
Oft hath the death chant's wail risen wierdly
O'er friends of the deer hunt, when we rose ere the
dawn,
O'er comrade and brother, child, squaw—all I have
known,
Departed forever from the Land of the Now;
gone—
Whither gone?

Bent down with the weight of many moons, play-
thing of sorrow,
High on a broken ledge of the mountain, I sit.
The young men rest below where the fires are lit;
They roll in their blankets with thoughts of to-
morrow,
Below the death mountain.
Unfit for the trail, for war, council plan,
A life ending useless as when it began,

I wait for the call that comes to the old man,
Cannot escape it—Tahmah nawis made it so.
From the blue mists that grope and creep up from
 below,
That deepen and darken each moment, I turn and
go,—
 Whither go?

One last pale gleam from the dying west lingers
 near me;
It hunts for a soul to carry home. Above from the
 mountain-top
Howls the night hunter. Below from the darkness
 a cry is sent up—
The night owl; sounds like the voice of the dead
 in Stickee,
 Land of the Shadows.
The wind strikes chill through the gathered blanket;
Shades from above and below are just met.
What is it I hear from the far mountain's summit?
The voices of lost ones come borne on the echo,—
Thicken round me; the spirits of dead forgot long
 ago
Beckon and call through the mists.—And the winds
 still blow,
 As I, too, go.

EXPLORING THE TWIN SISTERS

THROUGH a week of rainy or dubious weather the wooded peaks of the Twin Sisters held out alluring prospects of adventure and discovery. At early morn the sun, if it chanced to break through the clouds for a moment, sent down its rays reassuringly, and high up near the summit a tiny cabin half emerged from the shadows. As the night mists went scurrying farther down into the valleys, glimpses appeared of what seemed to be a winding road; but while the onlooker eagerly awaited further revelations, the heavy clouds invariably closed upon the scene, the sunbeams fled, and a steady gloom obscured what had already been revealed. Thus the time had passed, a week of rainy tramps and wood excursions, while ever the serene Sisters alternately smiled and frowned above the camp, tempting, yet unattainable.

It was little wonder, then, that when the eighth morning turned out to be a real June morning, with the sun shining down from a cloudless sky, the whole camp of girls unanimously decided in favor of mountain climbing. A young mountaineer was procured as a guide, and all other necessary arrangements were made. Jack, the guide, had given out the information that the distance to the summit was two miles, so that the trip up and back could easily be made during the afternoon. Indeed, it was not until early afternoon that the drenched undergrowth was considered sufficiently dry for travel; but at last

camp was closed, and the party of nine set out. An unexpected addition to the company arrived at the last minute, a queer sort of young man from the neighboring sawmill, who had been lingering about camp for several days past, and of whom we shall hear more later.

The hilarious crowd of girls and their chaperon, with the two bringing up the rear, took their way first along a well-travelled road, but soon left this for a dim trail leading almost straight up the mountain side. This was the shortest route, according to the native youths, but not necessarily therefore the quickest one, as was eventually discovered. A suspicious person might have questioned at the time, the whispered conversations of the guides, and their ill-concealed laughter. As it was, their behavior was attributed to the general crudeness of a mountaineer's nature, and so passed remark, for the time being.

The climb was indeed full of interest and charm, and the fragrance of the rain-scented air added zest. The steepness of the ascent gave excuse for frequent pauses, and opportunities for observation. First was the old log road, where piles of logs, cut down the previous winter, were waiting to be hauled away. Soon the traces of the loggers were left behind, and an old road, now bedded with moss and grass, was the only means of travel. On each side the impenetrable evergreens crowded close, in some places almost meeting overhead. All that could be seen was the clear blue of the sky above, and the closely hedged-in pathway. Presently the

course changed, and circled about the mountain, following its curved contours closely; now passing below a great boulder half hidden by trailing vines, at whose base a little spring of crystal water awaited the passer-by; again turning sharply upward and passing through dark and fearsome aisles of trees before it emerged into the sunlight once more.

Nothing was more noticeable to the unaccustomed ear than the utter solitude of the place. There was no shrieking of motors, nor rumble of cars, no noise of street traffic, no newsboys' cries—no sound save the voices of the party, the rare cry of a bird, the soft yet audible breathing of the mighty forest.

Up to this time, interest had centered upon the details of the march. The botanists of the group disputed over the classification of the flowering vegetation, of which there was a great variety. The discovery of a bed of ripe strawberries, small to be sure, but like drops of concentrated sweetness, caused a merry scramble. Once a long white feather floated down from a bird passing high above. A sudden turn of the road upward soon put an end to such observations, however, and all energy was put forward to make the long steep climb.

Some hours had already passed by and the physical strain was beginning to be felt, but it was not until this last ascent was attempted that any complaint was voiced. Many pauses were made, and the high spirits which were at first evidenced, seemed to have disappeared. But when at length, the top of the ascent was reached, all weariness was

forgotten in a new attraction. The road here merged into a small clearing far up on the mountain, a sort of plateau, whence a view was had of the country for miles around.

No one, who has not stood and gazed thus from the heights of the western pine-hills, can sense the grandeur of such an outlook. The vast extent of vision, startling at any time, was all the more so to those who had but lately been hemmed in so closely, and the sudden revelation was thrilling in the extreme. Before them, far as the eye could reach, lay wooded valleys and blue-green hills, range upon range of them, growing fainter and more indistinct as the distance increased, until finally all, merged into a hazy blue maze, met and mingled with the horizon. In the foreground lay two or three of the nearest towns, scarcely to be detected, nestled as they were, in the midst of the forest.

From this time on, the aspect of the way changed. Sometimes the same dim trail led along the mountain-side above a sheer drop of a hundred feet or more into the valley below. The covering of firs, which generally prevailed, was deceptive, giving to the mountain below the appearance of a more or less gentle slope, whereas the real nature of the incline was revealed only where the undergrowth was absent, and the earth in all its steepness was laid bare. The vegetation in most places was plentiful, and interesting as ever, but now the attention was drawn elsewhere, for always was the open view, the far vision, giving that exhilaration

of the spirits which only the mountain-climber experiences.

Time is forgotten in pleasure; but that does not stop the sun in his course. Presently some one noticed that the sunlight was not warm any longer, and there was a faint foreboding of twilight in the air that caused a general alarm. A speedy return was counseled by the chaperon, but all were unwilling to descend, so long as the mountain top still loomed above. The guides, too, who never seemed to weary, urged the ascent, asserting that only a little distance remained, and holding out a promise of a gold mine which could be inspected by the way.

By this time, however, suspicious looks began to be directed toward the guides. Their manner had been peculiar from the first, it was recalled. Sam, especially, frequently burst out into uncontrolled laughter, at which his companion, with suspicious gravity, would ask, "What tickles ye so, Sam, anyway?" Their eagerness to continue the climb seemed a trifle too apparent, and any suggestion of making a return met with their hearty disapproval. Some one ventured to take them to task, reminding them that the two-mile mark had been passed hours ago, but was informed that the "two miles" meant straight up, "as the crow flies," a bit of information which they had not volunteered at starting. More than once, too, the mountain lads seemed uncertain of their course, and twice had had to retrace their steps. All this had taken time. When the divide was reached, where the county road

crossed over, the sun was sinking rapidly. Every one was completely exhausted. Worst of all, one of the girls had sprained both ankles, and was able to walk only with difficulty.

As the weary group reached the road, hesitating which direction to take, two horsemen suddenly appeared, traveling across the range. From them it was learned that the gold mine "a little farther on" was five miles away, and that there was no road leading to the mountain's top. At this there was no more argument. The whole party was convinced of the treachery of the guides, and demanded to be taken back to camp at once.

Again a perplexing situation arose. Instead of making for the direction in which the camp supposedly lay, the travelers found themselves obliged to start in an almost opposite direction. There seemed to be no trail leading down the mountain, and the valley had to be circled before any trail led toward camp. Needless to say, laughter and merriment had long since been forgotten. Visions of a supperless night spent in the open grew steadily toward realization. Progress was necessarily slow, too, on account of the disabled girl, who now required assistance in order to walk at all. Finally, in hopes of sending back a vehicle of some sort, the party divided, Jack remaining with one division, while Sam and the others hurried ahead, and were soon lost to sight in the twilight.

Even in moments of keen distress, a person has the consciousness often, to observe details. So to more than one individual who made the ascent of

the Twin Sisters, although frightened and weary, there came a vivid impression on the return trip which will not soon pass away. The sun had set, and in the woods darkness was thickening momentarily; but the western sky was livid yet with fire. Against that flaming sunset, far out in the open country, Mt. Steptoe rose distinct, in sharp outline, a blue-black pyramid in a burning sea. To this day it remains as vivid to the imagination as on the night when it was first seen. It is chronicled among the records of the camp as one of the most inspiring sights witnessed during the entire fortnight.

Meanwhile darkness came, and a night without a moon. The awful silence of the forest grew more oppressive moment by moment. Slight noises heard within its secret depths were followed by quickened heart-beats, and strained silences, while the belated wayfarers clung closely together. There was no hysterical outbreak on the part of any one, but a bravery, however simulated, served to keep up courage. The advance party, under the direction of Sam, after several hours left the main road for a "short cut" down the mountain, losing the trail and finding it again, stumbling through ditches and falling over stones hidden in the darkness. Even the strongest at length felt the strain, and struggled along mechanically on limbs that threatened at any moment to give way. The fear had been growing to a certainty, too, that Sam was not sure of his bearings. No one spoke a word except to give or ask directions. Tension was strained to the

utmost. Just at the critical moment, the small boy of the group began to cry with weariness and fright, and there is no telling what might have been the end of the tale if the leader had not run against a fenced cow corral. It took but a moment to grope through the cattle, and enter the yard beyond, past a house and barn, and into the main road, and suddenly every one recognized a place not far from camp.

All was well with the advance guard; but how about those who had been left far behind in the darkness? Who could say in what strange ways they might be wandering? A sleepy mountaineer was sent back in search of them, while at camp the fires were lighted, and preparations made to dispell all hungriness and chill.

Suddenly a shout was heard, and the loiterers, who had somehow managed to increase their speed, tumbled into the firelight. It was eleven o'clock!

According to mountain calculations, fifteen miles had been covered during the afternoon's excursion, and much of that was difficult climbing. It was no wonder that every one remained about camp the next day. In spite of all the discomfort which had been undergone, however, no one could really regret the adventure, for to be lost in a forest has a peculiar romantic charm, especially when it is safely over. Nevertheless, Sam and Jack were in disgrace for some time thereafter. Indeed, they did not venture near camp for several days, and then it was to make amends for that wild chase up the Twin Sisters.

THE MOURNFUL CYNIC

WEEP on! Weep on!
Through the long bitter night shed your tears,
As you writhe at the thought of your fears;
But no comfort will come to the sore-aching heart,
Through its sorrow set from the world apart.

Weep on! Weep on!
In agony wring the tears from your eyes
Through the long bitter night, till it dies;
But know, O man, death's a phantom, elusive,
To all who, wailing, pursue it.

Dust and ashes!
Dust and ashes!
Where I thought roses would never fade.
Ah! Woe the day,
And woe is me,
For I fed on a phantasy's shade.

REMARKS ON NOVELTY

THIS is a very progressive age. Never before in the history of the world, has growth been so rapid and so apparent as in the twentieth century. If you measure one day with another, you can almost mark this growth. The fact that such conditions exist, is considered by some as grounds for self-complacency, by others as reason for alarm. Deep and weighty discussions have arisen consequently, with regard to the prevailing evils, and their remedies, or, on the other hand, attempted justifications of these so-called evils. This treatise, however, has nothing to do with such profound reasoning, but concerns itself rather, with a superficial characteristic of the age, the love for novelty.

We have said that this is an age of extremely rapid growth. It follows, then, that innovations are introduced at a greater rate of increase than in previous years. The terms "up to date," and "modern," can be applied only to conveniences invented within the last year, or at most, within the last five years. Things are considered "old fashioned" which are outside either of these limits, and what our fathers called "old fashioned" is to us "antiquated." The demand for something new is found in every branch of modern activity. Musicians, for instance, have become reluctant to play in public the old masterpieces, because these may have been heard before. In short, we have broken away as completely as possible, from old customs

and habits. We have nothing in common any more, with the "One Hoss Shay," "The Deserted Village," or a "Twice Told Tale."

As may be inferred, the novelty fad, if we may call it such, is coming to have a dominating influence upon literature. This field serves as one of the best examples of the new tendency. It is only to be expected that in harmony with all these other new surroundings we should demand a change of literature. This is the reason for the increasingly large sales of the popular magazines, and also for the decrease in the sale of classical works. The mere fact that a book is described as resembling the classic is enough to scare away the average reader. It is a compliment no longer, popularly speaking, to be referred to as familiar with Horace, Dante, or Shakespeare. There has come to be written, therefore, a sort of literature which satisfies the demand of the day, but is discarded on the morrow for something still more recent. The material for this kind of writing seems, naturally, to be running a little short. It has not proved possible, so far, to do away entirely with the ancient settings of life. Thus, in the beginning of the year, authors still find it necessary to fall back upon the worn-out theme of spring. It is noticeable, however, that in such cases the subject is concealed as skilfully as may be by a novelty in the treatment of it. It is really a wonder that we are not ashamed of the season itself, if indeed, we are not. All this straining after the unusual has come to be reflected in the style and subject matter of writers,

and much talent has been diverted from its natural mode of expression to an affected, and often ludicrous one.

The foregoing facts claim our attention. Perhaps we have been looking at conditions sometimes through a magnifying glass. At least, we must not confuse novelty and originality. True originality is ever to be praised. Nevertheless, even while granting this we maintain that there is a decided tendency among us to discard too hastily the ideas of the past, and to cling only to the new. This characteristic of the age will, we hope, shortly pass away. Let us prophesy, in conclusion, that at some not far distant time, a new novelty shall find favor, the novelty of the old.

TWO DREAMS

I SLEPT and dreamed.
Across the twilight heavens low,
A sudden field of emerald gleamed,
With rays of gold shot through and seamed.
Anon the blended radiance spreads,
Soft and faint as cloud forms fade,
Till all the fields of darkness glow,
And the way whereon the dreamer treads.
Swiftly the glory dimmed and sped,
I woke and found the vision fled.

I lived and dreamed,
And looked into the morrow's years.
A vision of bright hopes there seemed,
On which a sun eternal beamed;
A panorama stretching wide,
Of flowered paths and meadows fair,
That to the purpled mountain nears.
There my soul longs to abide,
Longs to climb those rugged walls.
In pain I woke; yet still that vision calls.

THE PARTING

If I did not love you,
As I love you, love,
 What then?
Gleaming lights of the summer sky,
Fathomless blue of the heavens high,
Breeze from the hills with lingering sigh,
 Reveal!

Love, hear the call I send.
If I love you not,
 Then hear!
Neither the depth of ocean's tide,
The rugged mount, nor the desert wide,
Shall prevail to draw you from my side,
 Through life.

But since I love you,
As I love you, love,
 Hear me!
Not the tempest's dismay, when the thunder appals,
Nor loneliness' sting, when the bleak even falls,
Shall ever restrain when thy vision calls.
 Farewell!

LAST NIGHT AND THIS MORNING

A VISION came into my life,
Its brightness made my lot seem fair.
It fled away 'mid storms and strife;
Now all seems dead and bare.

I woke this morn in bitter mood;
I saw the sunrise and its show reviled.
But now life laughs, and life seems good,
For you passed by and smiled.

MEMORIES

A DULL gray sky is o'er me as I write;
A smoky haze pervades the evening air.
I am alone; and all about is quiet.

'Tis the night when we used to meet.
Are you thinking, I wonder, as I am,
Of those moments at once sad and sweet?

Sad, because of the future's sure claim;
But, sweet, I hold, as life's dearest treasure;
And I bless thee now, as I murmur thy name.

There are times when the dread clouds of doubt
 descend,
And whisper dark fears to my trembling soul,
As though what once was, is ever at end.

But just now, like a balm to my yearning heart,
Methought the still even stirred, and whispered,
"Ye art still friends, though far apart."

ROMAN LITERATURE: AN APPRECIATION

I

THE belief is current that Latin is a term expressive of all that is dry and uninteresting in literature. This mistaken notion is the result of an ignorance of the literature, or at least of a very slight acquaintance with it; for a more thorough study shows us that the literary productions of the Latins are worthy of comparison even with some of the best of our English literature. It is not necessary at this place to deal with the objections to a study of Latin offered by the opponents of culture. The purpose of this discussion is to reveal the beauty and the worth of Latin literature.

The writings of the Romans were very extensive, and practically every phase of literature known at the present time was touched upon by this ancient people. Jurisprudence, agriculture, astronomy, archeology, philosophy, mathematics, geography and history, were the chief scientific subjects, while in prose also were written letters and orations. Dramas, including both tragedy and comedy, epigrams, satire, and lyrics, were written in poetic form. Some of these subjects are of interest from an archeological point of view only. Those, therefore, which are of interest chiefly from a literary viewpoint, only, will be taken into consideration. There are numerous authors whose works

are of considerable literary value, but, obviously, these cannot all be discussed. A few extracts from the most representative works will give one a very good idea of Latin literature as a whole.

II

We have said that much of Latin literature has only scientific value. Some of it, however, although primarily didactic, is of interest also to the student of literature. A good example is this quaint passage from an early work on agriculture, wherein the duties of the farmer's wife are enumerated:

"The farmer should see to it that his wife performs the following duties, and conforms to these rules. First of all, she should respect her husband. She should have as little intercourse as possible with the neighbor women, and should never entertain callers. Let her not go out to dine; she must not be a gad-about. It is not for her to practice religious observances, for the master does this for the whole household. See to it that she is neat and keeps the house in the same condition. Every day she should take care that the hearth is swept before she goes to bed. It is the duty of the housewife to see to it that there is food for every one. For this purpose, she should have plenty of chickens and eggs, and every year she should prepare dried pears, raisins, flour and all kinds of preserves."

A more interesting subject, at least a more modern one, is found in the field of philosophy. Some

of the books on this subject rank high in comparison with the Greek philosophy, which was really the instigator of the Roman. Chief among these productions are the meditations of Marcus Aurelius, with which every one is familiar. Another remarkable philosophical treatise is Cicero's dissertation on old age, from which the following quotation is taken:

"All the other stages of a man's life have been described, but the last act is passed over in silence by the idle poet. Nevertheless, it is necessary that there should be something final, just as the fruit of the tree and the produce of the earth has in its time the withering away, and the falling off. This is a fact which must be received calmly by the wise; for how does resisting nature differ from warring with the gods, as did the giants of old?"

Due to the fact that Rome was chiefly political in its interests, public speaking was extremely popular. An impressive and rhetorical form of language was cultivated, consequently, its influence upon literature being evident in the speeches and orations which have come down to us. The examples of this style are numerous, popular examples being the Ciceronian and Catilinarian speeches, examples too well known to need discussion here. The speeches of Brutus and Antony, as Shakespeare has imagined them, also give a very good idea of the usual type of the oration.

A class of prose which is primarily of literary

value is well illustrated in Pliny's letters. These letters deal with every subject of Roman life, from ghost stories to a description of his Tuscan villa, and a eulogy of his wife's virtues. Of particular interest to the reader is his description of the eruption of Vesuvius at the time of Pompeii's destruction; a vivid record told by an eyewitness. It is difficult to confine one's self to but one extract from Pliny's letters, but lack of space requires it. Here is a little note which the author wrote to a friend, while each was away on a vacation:

"All is well with me, since it is the same with you. You have your wife with you, I have my son. You will be delighting in the sea, the fountains, the verdure of the trees and fields, in your most charming villa. For I do not doubt that it is charming, indeed, where you may consider yourself luckier than the luckiest. I am hunting and studying here in Tuscany, occupations which I alternate with each other, or do at the same time; and so far I have not been able to decide which is hardest to do, to bag something, or to write an article. Farewell."

III

The instances cited above will give an idea of the scope and the nature of the Roman prose writings which are particularly noticeable for their literary value. The Latin language was especially suited to this form of writing, in which great proficiency was attained, since the purpose was pri-

marily precision, rather than beauty of expression. As may be inferred, such a style would hardly be suitable for poetry, and consequently we find that this form of literature was subordinated until the time of contact with the Greeks, when flexibility and grace were introduced into the language. After this period, poetry rose rapidly in importance and in popularity among the Romans, the productions of the greatest poets being works of art which have stood the test of time through all the centuries. Latin poetry, with some exceptions, has little of the musical quality which one finds in the German or in English poetry. It has, however, a grace and smoothness of motion, a quality which is accentuated by a considerable variety of metres. Whatever limitations there may be in the form of Latin poetry, finally, cannot be applied to the context; for as the following discussion will illustrate, the imagery and beauty of thought has in many instances seldom been excelled.

IV

One of the earliest forms of Latin poetry was the drama, a form which was cultivated to some extent, as long as the empire lasted. The comedy, especially, was widely presented, although adaptations of Greek tragedies were written also. The Roman dramas used stereotyped subjects, certain type forms always appearing. It exaggerated that practice of puns and word play for which Shakespeare is famous, and in fact this is its chief characteristic. Such being the case, it is obvious that a translation

could rarely convey the idea intended, an observation which applies to all translations of poetry. A translation seldom does justice to the original.

The satire and the epigram were favorite forms of verse with the Romans, since it enabled them to express that wit and humor which belonged to them particularly. The following, as some one has translated it, is an example of the satire, which goes to show that fame is not always pleasant for the poet:

"One day it chanced I took a stroll along the Sacred Way, as is my wont, conning o'er some trifling ode, and all absorbed in that. A man runs up to me, unknown to me except by name, and seizing my hand he says, 'How are you, dearest friend in all the world?' 'Pretty well just now,' I say, 'and always at your service.' When he kept following me, before he could begin, I said, 'I can't do more for you, now, can I?'

"But he replies, 'You surely know me, I'm a literary man.' Painfully eager to get off, I sometimes walked more quickly; again I stopped and whispered to my slave, while to my very ankle-bones the sweat flowed down.

"When I made no reply to all his chatter, he says, 'You're very anxious to be off, I've seen that long ago; but it's no use; I'll stick to you right on.'

"I droop my ears, like an impatient ass when on his back he feels too great a load. Finally I interrupt him with, 'Have you a mother, have you

friends who wish you well?’

“‘I haven’t one; I’ve laid them all to rest.’

“‘Happy they! Now I am left; dispatch me too; for a sad fate awaits me, which an old Sabelian hag with shake of her divining urn, foretold me in boyhood; him nor poison dread, nor cough, nor sword will carry off, nor pleurisy, nor crippling gout; some day a chatterbox will be his death.’

“At length, after all attempts to rid himself of the fellow proved of no avail, a plaintiff appeared, and hurried the troublesome fellow to court. ‘Then,’ says the poet, ‘thanks to Apollo, I got off.’”

The epic poem in its highest form is represented in Virgil’s *Æneid*, the story of the hero’s wanderings from the fall of Troy to the founding of Rome. It is a tale which abounds in vivid descriptions, and is of absorbing interest. It is too well known to be discussed here.

The last form of Latin poetry which we have to consider is the lyric. In this field is found the best and most beautiful of Latin thought and expression. In recognition of its importance, we are possibly justified in illustrating it at some length by selections from the two greatest lyric poets, Horace and Catullus.

Of the lighter lyrical poets, Catullus takes first place. Sometimes he gives expression to deep thought, but rarely. He was of an impetuous nature and deals with trifling matters of every day

life, now in sympathy, now in bitter sarcasm. He is chiefly famous for his love songs, which often resemble those of the English Cavalier poets. His love of nature and his imagination are shown in lines like these:

“The woods of Cytoris, where the leaves speak in whispers.”

“The oak flings her arms aloft, and drops of sweat stand on the bark of pine.”

“At first, as the waves move in slow procession at the command of the lenient breath of morning, they ring muffled chimes of laughter; but when the gale freshens, they crowd faster and faster, and fling back the splendor as they float far away in front of the crimsoning day.”

These verses illustrate the lighter vein in which Catullus usually writes:

“She says she would never love any but me,

Not even if Jupiter himself sought her out.

So she says; but what a woman says to her lover,

Is to be written on the wind, and the running water.”

“I hate and I love. Wherefore do you ask?

I know not why it is. I only know I am tortured thereby.”

One must go to Horace for a portrayal of the deeper sentiments. It is not altogether what is expressed, however, as much as the atmosphere which pervades his odes, which gives this effect. Horace

appeals to the modern reader more, perhaps, than any other Latin writer. He combines with Catullus' appreciation of beauty an atmosphere which can come only from greatness of mind, and nobility of character. Three selections from his odes must suffice to illustrate his style.

"The man upright in life, and free from guilt,
Needs not the protecting javelin, nor the bow,
Neither the quiver, filled with poisoned darts,
My friend Aristius;
Whether he travels through Syrtian heat,
Or pushes his way to dreaded Caucasus,
Or where fabled Hydaspes wends its course,
He is safe."

"Cold winter is breaking up at the welcome
change of spring,
The rollers drag down the dry boats to the sea;
Now neither the herd delights in the stall, nor
the ploughman in his hearth,
Nor are the meadows whitened with frost.

"Now Cytherian Venus leads forth her chorus in
the light of the moon,
And the comely graces join hands with the
nymphs,
And beat the ground with rhythmic tread, while
ponderous Vulcan
Eagerly visits his accustomed haunts."

"See how lofty Soractus stands dazzling white in
the snow.
The forests now bend low under their snowy
burden,

And struggle no longer against it,
While the rivers are held by the ice.

“Drive away the cold; pile up the wood on the
hearth,
And replenish it bountifully still. But more gen-
erously,
O Thaliarchus, draw me unmixed wine from the
flagon,
My four year old Sabine wine.

“Leave all else to the gods, who, one moment,
Scatter o’er the violent waves the warring winds,
The next, neither the cypress nor the old moun-
tain oak,
So much as stir in the breeze.”

v

It is evident that in this short paper a subject of so great scope can be little more than touched upon. Nothing short of a study of the Latin literature itself can give one an adequate idea of its nature. The purpose of this discussion, however, is merely to stimulate an interest in Latin as literature, and no attempt has been made to give a comprehensive and detailed account of it. The study of Latin, as many have said, may be out of place in certain courses of education; but if it is true that we should know the best that has been thought and said in the world, then it is hoped that these pages have sustained the claims of Latin literature as worthy of study.

INSPIRED BY—YOU

To the distilled sweetness of dawn's first hour
To the fragrance of clover beneath the sun's rays,
To the evening silence, and its shadowy power,
The bright-eyed warbler, of golden coat,
As he soars through the blue on wing afloat,
Or, hidden from sight in the tangled green,
Pours forth his joy to the world unseen,
Owes his deep rapture, his soul's harmony,
As I owe mine,—what I have,—to thee,
My friend.

PICTURES

A WILD rose bush grew unheeded beside a garden wall, strewing the walk with perfumed petals to cheer the passersby; but many hastened by unobservant. There came that way one morning an old man of uncertain step and silvery hair. A sudden light awoke in his dim eyes as they fell upon the blooming bush. Unconscious of the crowd, he stood musing, and if one might have shared his vision, there would have been glimpses of a country lane and a fragrant rose hedge, and a laughing face among the flowers. There might have been seen, too, the passage of years, but always the roses and the face. Then suddenly a gloom descends, and when it passes away, the flowers are gay as ever, but no laughter sounds from among them, and the merry face has vanished. Somewhere a clock strikes an hour, and the old man recalls his wandering mind with a start. Still as if in a dream he reaches for a half blown bud, and pins it gently to his coat. A crowd of noisy schoolboys hurries by, followed by other crowds, and when the walk is again cleared there is nothing to be seen except a wild rose bush drooping over the garden wall.

One frosty moonlight night as a traveler passed through a strange country, he came upon a little lake nestled closely between the hills, like a gem in its setting. Black and shining lay its ice-covered surface, with scarcely a ripple in it, for the wind

seldom troubled the waters there. At intervals all around grew thick clumps of scrub willow, now stiff and bare. Here and there along the banks, a charred and blackened stump told mutely the story of a crackling bonfire piercing the darkness in a stream of light across the ice, past which flashed for a moment the gliding forms of merry skaters, only to disappear into the blackness beyond. Only the rattling of the frozen branches disturbed the wintry night. Around lay the hills, white and still. Once a belated night bird flew rapidly past, but even as the wayfarer gazed after it, a cloud passed over the moon.

A prospector, with his inevitable following of pack animals comes slowly up the bare mountain path, winding in and out among the boulders which confront him everywhere. A stifling cloud of gray dust ascends gradually with the group, or settles harmlessly over the barren earth; for not a living plant relieves the monotony of the landscape, unless one might mention a few scrawny bushes striving to hold their own in the struggle for existence. Far away across the canon, a great brick-red mountain rears its isolated peak, adding its testimony to the aridness of the region. Down in the gorge, hundreds of feet below, a tiny stream winds along, whose grassy borders only serve to heighten the dearth around. Everywhere, on the rocks, or on the bushes, lies a thick coat of dust; and now the air is thickening again at the horseman's approach, while the sun beats down unmercifully from a cloudless sky.

TO THE GALLANT OARSMAN

SUN at its brightest,
Heart at its lightest,
Ebb at the highest,
 Saturday here!
Lure of the wild-wood,
Spice of the dead-wood,
Describe if one could,
 Skies all clear.

Water a-ripple, silver blue,
Ferry crossed, Newport adieu.
Boy Scouts' Isle ahead of us too.

 On our way!
Padlock forced and boat house opened,
A schoolma'am as ballast at either end;
Water is deep, but the Fates defend.
 Shove away!

Perilous passage safely o'er,
Newer perils await on shore.
Mountains ahead and steep cliffs lower;
 Can we ascend?
Breaking through brush and tangled fern,
Baffled and beaten at every turn,
We stand at length on the summit stern;
 Journey at end.

Evening closing,
Twilight approaching,
Daylight is waning

At last.

Eager boat waiting and trusty rower,
Would that his task were never o'er!
City in sight, and home once more—
Holiday past!

THE COURSE OF THE YEARS

To Thee, who didst our forms invent,
And breathed into our souls the life
That gave us power 'gainst Thee to strive,
And for thy mercies give lament,
I sing my solitary lay.

When first the child whom Thou hadst made
Awoke and viewed in ecstasy
The marvels of his legacy,
The creatures who his will obeyed,
Thou wert to him a Friend.

But soon the tempter tried his art,
And banished joy and happy ease;
Came weary care, and toil's increase;
Earth and heaven grew far apart,
And Thou a distant God.

Long years passed by since first man fell,
Long years of sorrow, yet more sin;
Then came the sinless Christ divine,
Heaven's flaming messenger, to tell
That God forgives and loves.

Again, to whom the Spirit will,
Earth blooms a paradise of love,
Reflected down from that above,
Which gleams when earthly cares are still,
Yet dim and seen afar.

So teach us, Thou, the way to learn,
Thy cause to cherish and maintain,
The lofty mark again attain;
Then erring mankind shall return,
With Thou once more a Friend.

A WAYSIDE INCIDENT

It was an ideal day in warm midsummer. The verdure of the earth was at its greenest, the hollyhocks and larkspur nodded in the cooling breeze, in blossom every one, while the air was redolent with the dying fragrance of the locusts. Overhead huge billows of clouds rolled lazily along, as if to a summer-long rest. Not a sound could be heard, save the trickling of a fountain hidden somewhere behind the shrubbery, or, if it did not escape notice, the buzz and hum of the bees, who alone of all living things had no time for idleness.

Presently a maiden came walking slowly along the pathway. She was a beautiful maiden, clad all in white, with face and hair to make any artist snatch his brush in haste. The embodiment of all grace and sweetness seemed for a moment to have loitered on its way, a woodland sprite, strayed from her native haunts, or perhaps a water nymph, attracted by the gurgling water-font.

Slowly the maiden took her away, now and then stooping to inhale the fragrance of a dewy rose, and ever and anon stopping alert, at the trill of a bird from the tree-top; but most of all, her eyes wandered afar, dreamily, into the depths of the deep blue sky, or followed idly the course of its lofty air craft. For the girl was a dreamer, and she sought a noble prince, a dazzling youth, in rich attire, who should bow low before her, offering his heart. Him she sought, and thus far sought in vain.

At a turn in the way stood a huge locust, with flower-clusters more fragrant than the rest. Nearby on the bank sat a handsome youth—and he was a prince—absently plucking daisies. For he, too, dreamed, and he saw in his dream a fair vision with face like the morning, clad in shimmering white.

On a sudden, from around the shrubbery, appeared the maiden, and a light air was upon her lips. With a start, the youth sprang before her with uncovered head, his heart in his eyes. But the maiden drew aside her draperies delicately, and passed on; for she said to herself, "He is only a gardener."

The youth slowly turned, and dully picked up his spade; and the scent of the locust seemed suddenly to stifle him with its perfume. But the maiden tripped on, and followed still the vision far ahead, oh, very far ahead.

HELEN

THE daylight wanes and darkness falls,
Forgetful sleep his summons calls;
But through the night and as I wake,
Throbs ever "Helen" in my heart,
And "Helen, Helen" through my brain.

The long dim aisles are ghostly still,
The dim ray slants through holy pane;
And I would that one wert by my side,
And hand in hand forevermore,
Together bow in reverence here.

Oh, wild, bleak wind of wintry chill,
Oh, falling flakes that sheddeth rest;
Wilt purge the heart and cover soft the wound?
Ah! grant me surer cure, a heavenly balm;
But what 't may be, I leave to guess.

LETHE

ON through the thickets in frenzied haste.
What though the brambles mangle and tear?
Over the sands of the sun-scorched waste
Though the desert beast prowls from his lair.
On, ever on, to the valley of Lethe!

Up the steep cliff in the deadly night,
The jagged rocks bathed with their bloody toll;
Close by the wolf roams abroad in his might—
What matter? 'Tis there lies the goal.
Press on, ever on, to the blissful Lethe.

Crushed and bleeding and mangled and torn,
Every step costs a smothered scream;
But the mountains are crossed and the perils borne,
And, there at hand winds the deep dark stream,
See! 'Tis the river Lethe.

The eager hand plunges deep in the flood,
The parched lips bend to taste, when sudden
I fling down the balm in its own vile mud,
Turn and flee to the woe whence I came unbidden,
Fleeing, fleeing, the cursed Lethe!

AN AUTUMN FANCY

O, FOR a brief sweet autumn afternoon,
In girlhood's beatific realm of dreams,
An hour from memory's cherished garden plucked,—
Flowers that fade and die, alas, too soon.

 From far a gleam appears,
 A breeze that through the years
Blows back the fragrance of the country leas,
 And thoughts of youth recall,
 Past scenes, but most of all,
A girl a-dreaming midst the laden apple trees.

Concealed by drooping limbs that sway and creak,
Thick hung with red and juicy Jonathans,
Or through the dusky green the amber tint
Of Jeffries, pied with many a crimson streak;

 With Wagner's ruddy cheek,
 And Pippins plump and sleek,
The mellow "punkies" bursting just o'erhead,
 While hung a-poised on high,
 The Maiden Blush so shy,
Persuades that hither startled Grecian Daphne fled.

There, pillowed on the tawny, sun-warmed mold,
In utter solitude, with none to spy,
The cloud be-sprinkled sky spread high above,
Below, the fields touched now with gaudy gold;
 And on the air no sound,
 To break the silence 'round,

Save far away the house dog's bark at home,
Or the noise a windfall makes,
When the weighted fruit tree shakes,
And it falls with a "plunk" in the soft and yielding
loam.

Thus fast secure from household's busy thrift,
The troublous care floats off on airy wings,
And fancies fond the willing mind possess;
When sudden shadows darkly falling, lift
The gaze up through the blue
Of the sky's translucent hue,
Surprised to find the sun already low;
O, thus to dream away
One hazy autumn day,
Amid the laden orchard trees of long ago!

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